



AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT OF VERMONT HEALTH ACCESS

## Medicaid and Exchange Advisory Committee Meeting: 05/24/2021\*

\*Convened virtually with call-in information due to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency in accordance with flexibilities enacted by Act 92 of 2020.

### Committee Members Present

✓	Jessa Barnard	✓	Yacouba Jacob Bogre		Kelly Dougherty
✓	Lisa Draper	✓	Mike Fisher	✓	Devon Green
✓	Dale Hackett	✓	Rebecca Heintz	✓	Sharon Henault
✓	Zachary Hozid		Gladys Konstantin		Helen Labun
✓	Joan Lavoie		Erin Maguire	✓	Gustavo Mercado Muniz
✓	Kirsten Murphy	✓	Jamie Rainville	✓	John Schultz
✓	Sarah Teel	✓	Julie Tessler	✓	Jason Williams

### Other Attendees Present

	<del>Cory Gustafson</del>	✓	Adaline Strumolo	✓	Sandi Hoffman
✓	Nissa James	✓	Zachary Goss	✓	Sean Sheehan
✓	Shannon Mead	✓	Victoria Jarvis	✓	Shayla Livingston
✓	Scott Cerreta	✓	Bard Hill	✓	Sarah Peterson
✓	Nieko Lavery	✓	Betty Morse	✓	Brendan Hogan
✓	Josette Duarte	✓	Lucie Garand	✓	Kelsey Thornton
✓	Sebastian Arduengo	✓	Cynthia Seivwright	✓	Molly Sweeney

### Agenda

- **Supporting Documents:** Posted to <https://dvha.vermont.gov/advisory-boards/medicaid-and-exchange-advisory-committee/agendas-and-materials>  
Advisory Committee 5\_24\_21 Agenda.pdf  
Advisory Committee PPT 5\_24\_2021.pdf
- **Convene**  
Devon Green, Co-Chair, chaired the meeting and called the meeting to order.
- **Roll Call, Approval of Minutes, and Quorum**  
Zack Goss, Health Care Training and Communication Manager (DVHA), completed the roll call, and determined a quorum was present. The motion to approve the April 2021 meeting minutes was made, seconded, the Chair stated the question to approve the April 2021 meeting meetings to the Committee, and upon no discussion, the Chair put the motion to a vote. The April 2021 meeting minutes were approved.

- **Co-Chair Nomination for July 2021-June 2022 Term**

Zack Goss, Health Care Training and Communication Manager (DVHA), reviewed co-chair nominations for the July 2021-June 2022 term. Devon Green and Erin Maguire (current co-chairs) were the only members to receive nomination. Co-chair Green accepted the nomination on behalf of the current co-chairs, pending no objection from Committee membership. A motion was made, seconded, and Committee members then conducted an election vote for Devon Green and Erin Maguire to serve the Medicaid and Exchange Advisory Committee co-chairs for the July 2021-June 2022 term. Among those members who voted, “Aye” votes in favor were unanimous, confirming Green and Maguire as Committee chairs for the next term. The Committee discussed the importance of member participation in chair role and current and former chairs were encouraged to proactively recruit nominees for the chair positions in the future. Interested members were encouraged to outreach to the chairs and/or DVHA staff for more information.

- **Committee Discussion: American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) & Effectively Communicating Changes to Vermonters**

Nissa James, Health Care Director (DVHA), provided a review of the impact of the American Rescue Plan Act for the Vermont health insurance marketplace given the Advisory Committee’s previous meeting contained a lot of information and was one month prior. Next, the “Guiding Framework for Communications” was presented to the Committee for review given the Committee had started the discussion at the April meeting but had limited time to finalize the framework. The Committee indicated that the 6 questions developed to be used as a checklist for DVHA staff working on communications, including education and outreach activities, would guide effective communications during the process of material development. The Department will begin the next step of compiling resources specific to answering each question before presenting the questions for staff review and feedback. The 6 questions are:

- 1). Is the material **accessible**?
- 2). Is the material **actionable**?
- 3). Is the material **credible and trusted**?
- 4). Is the material **relevant**?
- 5). Is the material **timely**?
- 6). Is the material **understandable**?

Next, the Advisory Committee reviewed draft communications developed to effectively communicate the American Rescue Plan Act’s expanded financial help to Vermonters. The importance of having multiple channels – mass media for broad reach as well as community-based partners, providers, employers, family, friends, and colleagues - for sharing information was discussed. A Committee member indicated that other state departments and agencies are also vital for helping to share information broadly and should be listed. The Committee reviewed draft messages developed for specific audiences and engaged in a robust conversation about recommended revisions that would help to support accessibility and/or understandability. As an example, feedback was provided that “health insurance” tends to resonate with people better than “health coverage.”

*For more information, please see Advisory Committee PPT 5\_24\_2021.pdf slide 4-12*

- **Commissioner's Update**

Nissa James, Health Care Director (DVHA)

Addie Strumolo, Deputy Commissioner (DVHA)

The Commissioner's Office provided an update for the Advisory Committee regarding the DVHA Commissioner's recent resignation to ensure broad awareness and that Commissioner Gustafson's last day as Commissioner was Friday, May 28, 2021. The Committee was informed that the Department and Agency are in the process of transition planning given that DVHA's Chief Operating Officer is retiring June 4, 2021 after 43 years with the State of Vermont. The Commissioner's Office plans to update the Committee on the transition at the June meeting and requested time on the agenda to provide an update.

The Committee was provided an update that the 2021 legislative session had adjourned; [H.430](#) had not yet arrived to the Governor of Vermont for signature but the Department expected it to arrive soon. The Committee was also provided a budget update: the most recent weekly DVHA Medicaid Program budget report showed an overspend of \$12,987,480 for state fiscal year 2021. During the Department's state fiscal year 2022 budget presentation, the Department had indicated that the COVID-19 public health emergency would be the primary factor in caseload and utilization expectations for fiscal year 2021 and 2022. As the COVID-19 public health emergency is expected to continue, a Committee member asked if state fiscal year 2022 DVHA budget issues due to the increased caseload would be addressed through the budget adjustment process. The Department confirmed that it will continue to closely monitor caseload and utilization in the Medicaid program, and that for state fiscal year 2022, any budget issues will be addressed through the budget adjustment process. A Committee member requested that all members of the Advisory Committee begin to receive the weekly DVHA Medicaid Program budget report.

- **1115 Global Commitment Waiver Renewal Overview**

Ashely Berliner, Director of Medicaid Policy (DVHA)

*For more information, please see Advisory Committee PPT 5\_24\_2021.pdf slide 14-31*

- **Public Comment**

No public comment was offered.

- **Final Committee Discussion: Next Meeting is June 28, 2021 from 10AM – 12PM.**

- **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00pm.

**Additional about the Department's response to the COVID-19 public health emergency may be located here:** <https://dvha.vermont.gov/covid-19>